

presently fell to quarrelling and persecuting in spite of William's irenic exhortations and efforts.

For a time, however, the compromise seemed to work well enough. Don John was forced to ratify the Pacification by a Perpetual Edict and withdraw the Spanish troops as the condition of his admission into Brussels. A few weeks of the attempt to govern in Philip's behalf on such terms proved both the impossibility of the task and the unfitness of the splendid cavalier, whose romantic brain projected the conquest of England as the preliminary to the hand of the captive Mary of Scots, for his new *role*. William, who was not satisfied with the terms of the Perpetual Edict, and had no trust in Philip's compromise with heretics, certainly did nothing to help to make him shine in the art of government, as he had shone in that of war. He was sceptical of royal concessions and professions of benignity after the grim experience of royal despotism for ten years of undiluted woe, and the memory of Alva's *regime* might well have made a sceptic of the most credulous royalist. Even if Don John was personally sincere, he was only a stopgap. Hence the attitude of alert suspicion, the policy of outwitting, thwarting, baiting the Don, through the States-General, into retreat and defiance. "Don John," says Mr Groen van Prinsterer, who evidently believes in his sincerity, "wished to govern with mildness, and his adversaries, directed and encouraged by the Prince of Orange, succeeded, by the most alarming suggestions and the most outrageous suspicions, by excessive pretensions, by unmerited reproaches, humiliations, insults, conspiracies, in discrediting him, in paralysing his efforts, in irritating his *amour propre*, in destroying his authority, in keeping him in perpetual fear for his life and liberty, and finally in forcing him to seek safety, with the bit between his teeth, in a stroke of despair." This may be a true delineation of the tactics of the opponents of Don John. It is not the less evident that he was attempting an impossible task, as long as a single reservation existed in the mind of his master that might lead to a renewal of Spanish despotism, while his sincerity in attempting a reconciliation is open to grave suspicion. Besides, as M. Volkaersbeke remarks, "Too much blood had already been shed to arrest a revolution." The spirit of revolt had